

place to have modified the system of Gleditsch to have provided tables based merely upon the notion that these tables are known per se e.g., via Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. These distinct arguments will be resummarized below.

1. Even Assuming (Strictly Arguendo), That It Would Have Been Obvious to Add Tables To The System Of Gleditsch, Applicant's Claim 1, 16 And 20 Combinations Would Not Have Resulted

Applicant respectfully submits that even if one were to somehow graft Microsoft Excel spreadsheets onto the system of Gleditsch, Applicant's independent claim combinations would not have resulted from such a combination. More specifically, and for example, Applicant's claim 1 combination recites four different tables. Specifically, a project table having certain information, an item table having different information, an algorithm table having algorithm information which is referenced in the item table, and a requirements table populated by querying demand for items and traversing tables of the database. Even if one were to somehow modify Gleditsch based upon the per se notion that spreadsheets and tables exist, there is no motivation absent hindsight reference to Applicant's own specification which would have resulted in the specific four tables recited in Applicant's claim 1 combination. The mere fact that Gleditsch operates on data similar to that which is recited in Applicant's claim 1 combination is not sufficient to establish a prima facie case of obviousness that the four tables listed in claim 1 would necessarily result upon some combination of Gleditsch with Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

Additionally, the tables interact with one another in a manner which is not taught or suggested by the cited documents. For example, the algorithm table has an algorithm table for each algorithm referenced in an item table. Plus even if one were to create some number of tables in Gleditsch based upon the general, unspecific notion that tables are an easy way to organize data, there simply is no modification that would have induced one of ordinary skill in the art to create an item table and an algorithm table which interacts with one another in the manner

specified in Applicant's claim 1 combination. Only Applicant's specification describes this combination of elements. Similar comments apply to Applicant's claim 16 and 20 combinations.

2. There Was No Motivation To Have Combined Gleditsch With Microsoft Excel Spreadsheets In The First Instance

As mentioned above, it is respectfully submitted that no possible combination of Gleditsch and the per se knowledge of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets would have enabled one of ordinary skill in the art to have arrived at Applicant's claimed combinations. Moreover, there was no motivation at the time the invention was made to have combined Gleditsch with Microsoft Excel spreadsheets in the first place. As is clear from reading the Gleditsch patent, this document is unconcerned with the manner in which data will be stored, organized and integrated in order to achieve the described processing steps. At most, Gleditsch makes a general reference to a database for storing predefined parameters, information about customer orders and historical data. See, e.g., column 4, lines 20-23 of Gleditsch.

Despite this silence, all of the Applicant's claim tables are deemed to have been obvious based on the general notion that Excel spreadsheets were known at the time of the present invention. However, it is respectfully submitted that mere knowledge that spreadsheets existed is insufficient to have motivated one of ordinary skill in the art to have provided spreadsheets to the system of Gleditsch. In particular, it appears that Gleditsch's database was sufficient to enable the processing methods described therein to be implemented and that there would have been no reason for one of ordinary skill in the art, based merely upon general knowledge of Excel spreadsheets, to have somehow determined that grafting such spreadsheets onto the system of Gleditsch would have been desirable in any way.


In the Official Action, it is mentioned that "the use of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets within Gleditsch et al.'s system as a way to keep the data organized in an efficient user-friendly manner." However, it is respectfully submitted that there is no evidence in any of the documents of record that suggest that Gleditsch's system

would have benefited from some additional spreadsheets to further keep the data organized. It is respectfully submitted that this motivation can only be considered the product of hindsight reconstruction based on Applicant's own specification and, therefore, is insufficient to establish a prima facie case of obviousness.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Gleditsch in view of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets be reconsidered and withdrawn. All of the objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for Allowance and a Notice to the effect is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the foregoing, she is encouraged to contact the undersigned at 540-361-1863.

Respectfully submitted,

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